

A

S E R M O N

Preached (*in Part*).

Before the RIGHT WORSHIPFUL the
DEAN of the ARCHES,

And the REVEREND the
Clergy of the Deanery of SHOREHAM;

Assembled in *Visitation* at *Sevenoaks* in KENT,
on *Friday* the 21st Day of *May*, 1742.

Addressed to them by the Reverend HENRY PIERS,
A. M. Vicar of the Parish of *Bexley*; sometime
Student of *Trinity College, DUBLIN.*

But the Time will come, when Men will not endure sound Doctrine.
Gal. iv. 16.

Am I therefore become your Enemy, because I tell you the Truth?
Gal. v. 16.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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®



DEAN of the ARCHES

And the Reverend Sir

My dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst.

in relation to the proposed alterations in the Dean's Office, and in reply to inform you that the same have been referred to the Dean of the Arches for his consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
John Smith

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1856



To the REVEREND the

C L E R G Y

*Who met in Visitation at SEVEN-
OAKS in KENT, on Friday,
May 21, 1742.*

Reverend BRETHREN,

I.



S this Discourse gave great Offence when it was delivered, and has been since much misrepresented by some of the Audience, I am obliged publickly to submit it to the Judgment of all those who regard the Holy Scriptures, and pay a due Deference to the Constitution of our *English* Church.

II. The Particulars of the Offence which was shewn at the Time of its being delivered, (tho' I believe unprecedented) I chuse to conceal, as far as it lies in my Power. And I heartily wish they had been less public; that they might have been wholly conceal'd for ever.

III.

III. I have little more to add, but that as Christianity in general is at the lowest Ebb, I sincerely wish we might all join in earnestly praying and wrestling with God for the Restoration of it: That we might all endeavour both by our preaching and living, (thro' the Strength of God who is with us *always unto the End*) to revive a truly *spiritual* Religion, a Religion holy and undefiled; an *inward* Religion, converting the Soul, and filling it with all the Fruits of the Spirit. And as our own Church, in particular, is surrounded with Enemies on every Side (no less formidable than those of the Church of *Rome*, whom yet we seem to dread *alone*) since she is surrounded not only with Infidels profest, and with the notoriously *Ungodly* of all Denominations; but also with the *Godly unrenew'd*, with the *Religious Men*, the *good Christians* (so called;) who yet overlook the Great End of all Religion, *the Restoration of the fallen Nature*: who are content with such a Faith, as neither purifies the Heart nor works by Love, but allows them to serve both God and Mammon: Since notwithstanding the *Purity* of her *Constitution*, this is, generally, the State of the *Members* of our Church: Shou'd we not all pray to be enabled to *renew* her Gospel Spirit, to *recall* the Spirit of her Godly Reformers; and to defend her by *preaching* and *practising* her *Doctrines*, the

the same that were once delivered to the Saints. Let us but use the Weapons she herself puts into our Hands, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against her ; against those of her Communion, I mean, who *believe and live*, what she hath taught.

IV. Ought we not especially to press upon our People the Doctrines of the 9th. 10th. 11th. 12th. 13th. and 18th. Articles? And to read and expound to them the following Homilies, peculiarly necessary for the *present Times*: Of the *Reading and Knowledge of the holy Scriptures*, Of the *Misery of Mankind*, and of his *Condemnation to Death everlasting thro' his own Sin* ; Of the *Salvation of Mankind by only Christ our Saviour from Sin (here) and everlasting Damnation (hereafter :)* Of the *true and living Christian Faith*: Of *good Works annexed to Faith*: Of *Christian Love and Charity*: The *Beginning of the Homily of good Works*, and *first of Fasting*: Of the *Nativity for Christmas*: Of the *Passion for Good-Friday*: Of the *Resurrection for Easter-day*: Of the *coming down of the Holy Ghost for Whit-Sunday*: The *Homily for Rogation-Week*: For them who take Offence at certain Places of Scripture: For *Repentance and true Reconciliation with God*.

V. To make up for the many Deficiencies in this Discourse, I heartily recommend to all, Laity as well as Clergy, Mr. Law's
 I earnest

(vi)

earnest and serious Answer to Dr. Trapp's Discourse on the Folly, Sin, and Danger of being Righteous overmuch. May God bless both it and this to all into whose Hands they may fall! For let the World think what it will of me, my Heart's desire, and Prayer to God for Israel (that Israel which even yet Ignorant of God's Righteousness goeth about to establish its own) is, that they may be saved,





I COR. iv. 1, 2.

Let a Man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ and Stewards of the Mysteries of God.

Moreover it is required in Stewards, that a Man be found faithful.

I. **A**RE we so to be accounted of? Are we *Ministers of Christ and Stewards of the Mysteries of God*? Yea doubtless; as many of us, my Brethren, as are called of God as was Aaron: As many of us as believe in our Hearts that the Holy Ghost has made us *Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own Blood*: as many of us as, in the Sincerity of our Hearts, have answered these weighty Questions: *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this Office and Administration; to serve God for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his People? Do you think that you are truly called according to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ—to the Ministry of the Church?* And this, I hope, as many of us as are so called, have seriously weighed and deeply considered; lest we should be found *unfaithful to the greatest Trust, the most important Charge, that ever was, or indeed, (I may dare to say) can be committed by God to Man.*

B

2. For

2. For know we not, that the Priesthood whereunto we are ordained, is the very Priesthood of Christ himself? That the Office of *every* Christian Pastor is the Office of Christ? even to (a) *feed his Lambs and Sheep* with the same divine and powerful Word as he did? that our Business *now* is the same as his was, even through his Power, (b) *to bruise the Serpent's Head* in Man? Is it not our Office to (c) *work together with Him*; to labour, yea (d) *to travel in Pain*, 'till Christ, who is the Image of God, be formed in those, who (having lost it in the general Fall) are committed to our Charge? Is not our Function an *Authoritative Commission* to minister in holy Things? a (e) *Separation unto the Gospel of God* from the World; its *Business*, its *Honours*, its *Pleasures*? An Ordination of Men in Things pertaining to God? which every one who has received may say, “ (f) *I am made a Minister to fulfil the Word of God, that Mystery hid from Ages and from Generations, but now made manifest to his Saints; even CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY.*”

3. Taking it for granted then, that our Ministry is a *Continuation* of Christ's own Office and Priesthood upon Earth; I shall (by his Assistance by whom a *Dispensation of the Gospel* is committed to us,)

1st. Briefly observe the *Importance* of the Character we bear, as *Ministers of Christ*, and *Stew-*

(a) John xxi. 15, 16.

(b) Gen. iii. 15.

(c) 2 Cor. vi. 1.

(d) Gal. iv. 19.

(e) Rom. i. 1.

(f) Col. i. 25, 26, 27.

ards

ards of the *Mysteries of God*; wherein is implied the *Faithfulness* that is required of us:

2dly. Describe the Doctrines we should teach, the Tempers we should be of, and the Lives we should lead, who bear this Character: and

3dly. Inquire, whether we do preach these Doctrines, and have such Tempers, and lead such Lives.

And 1st. I am briefly to observe the *Importance* of the Character we bear as *Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God*.

To shew this, our Lord, the first Time he appeared publicly after his Resurrection, presents himself to those, whom he had chose, and appointed for *this* Office and Ministry: he solemnly tells them (a) *All Power is given to me in Heaven and Earth*; and in that Power commissions them in these Words, (b) *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you*. As if he had said, “ I send you to execute the *same* Priesthood on
“ Earth, which I, *who am a Priest for ever*,
“ execute in Heaven: and if ye go out in my
“ Strength only, and simply look unto me; what-
“ soever ye do in my Name, I will ratify and
“ confirm it. (c) *Whatsoever ye shall bind on*
“ *Earth, shall be bound in Heaven*; and what-
“ soever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in
“ Heaven. And lo! I am with you and your
“ Successors always, even unto the End of the

(a) Matt. xxviii. 18.

(b) John xx. 21.

(c) Matt. xviii. 18.

“ *World.* Go ye therefore in this my Strength,
 “ (for do not I send you) and preach the Gospel
 “ to every Creature. Declare unto Men my
 “ Father’s one Decree concerning them. He
 “ that believeth shall be saved, and he that be-
 “ lieveth not shall be damned, and publish the
 “ glad Tidings of Salvation to the *Whole* lost
 “ Race; that his Promise may accordingly be
 “ fulfilled, and in me all Nations of the Earth
 “ be blessed. Go ye then μαρτυρεσατε παντα τα εθνη,
 “ make all Nations my Disciples, by baptizing
 “ them, by washing away both the Guilt and
 “ Defilement of the fallen Nature; by baptizing
 “ them out of the Nature of Satan, whereinto
 “ they are now fallen; * into the Name or Na-
 “ ture of the Father, and of the Son, and of
 “ the Holy Ghost.”

2. And in how awful a Manner did the great
 Apostle and High Priest of our Profession confer
 this venerable Office, this high Authority on the
 first Ministers he sent forth! *When he had said
 this, he breathed on them and said, receive ye the
 Holy Ghost:* Words, not without Cause, re-
 tained by our Church, and which have as really
 imparted the Holy Ghost unto us also; unless
 (with the World which never could yet receive
 him) we have believed these to be vain Words;
 unless we have been guilty of the most profane
 Mockery of God, and that on the most solemn
 Occasion. But indeed, my Brethren, according

* ΒΑΠΤΙΖΟΝΤΕΣ ΑΥΤΟΥΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ is literally into the
 Name, and if into the Name, then into the (commu-
 nicable) Nature also: Seeing both נִקְוָה and κυριος
 imply Nature, Essence, Being; as well as Name.

to our Faith, so hath it been unto us. And according as we have received him or not, so have we met with a Blessing or a Curse; so have we offered holy or strange Fire unto the Lord: So have we preached with Power, or with none Effect: So have our Labours been successful or without Success; so have we ourselves felt the Power of the Word, or spoke with *unaffected* Lips the *dead* Letter only: (a) So, in a Word, have we converted many, or few, or none at all *from the Power of Satan unto God.*

3. It is by receiving the Holy Ghost, that every Minister of *Christ* (not those only who were first ordained of him) is an Apostle; that is, *one sent of God*, or a Messenger (b) to declare his Terms of Faith and Repentance to the People: One *sent* by the *Power* and according to the *Will* of God; not by the Will of his Parents, or his own; but by *Jesus Christ*, and that *for the Work of the Ministry, for the Perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying the Body of Christ.* And of every such Steward, it cannot but be required, that he be found faithful, *μη καταλυσαι, μηδε δολων τον λογον τω Θεω*; not corrupting or cauponizing the Word of God; not mixing, adulterating or softening it, in order to reconcile it to the Taste of a crooked and perverse Generation: not *bandling it deceitfully for filthy Lucre's Sake*; not prostituting it to By-ends, to the vile Purposes of gaining earthly Things; Profit, or Honour, or Preferment: for this in the Apostle's Words is, *to* (c) *serve our own Bellies*, (d) *to preach ourselves, and*

(a) 2 Cor. iii. 6.

(c) Rom. xvi. 18.

(b) Philip. ii. 25.

(d) 2 Cor. iv. 5.

not

not Christ Jesus the Lord. A faithful Steward has a *single Eye* to the Glory of *Him* that sent him ; And *as of Sincerity, as of God, in the Sight of God, speaks he in Christ.* Having the Word of Reconciliation committed to him, he deals it out prudently, and with all his Power ; according to the several Exigencies of his Flock he rightly divides the Word of Truth : And with all that Ability, which God *alone* giveth, he ministers to those who are Heirs of Salvation. Yea, as an Ambassador of Christ, he is continually crying to Sinners: (a) *Be ye reconciled to God:* For God (he has Power and Commandment to tell them) is reconciled to *them* ; *as he was in Christ ; not imputing their Trespases unto them* ; for (b) they are already *imputed* to Christ, as his Righteousness is to *every* Believer : (c) *for he made Him Sin, who knew no Sin,* to this very Intent, that (d) *we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.*

Very many are the other Passages in holy Writ, which set forth the *Importance* of, and consequently imply the *Necessity* of *Faithfulness* in, the Ministerial Stewardship.

But I hasten, secondly, to describe, (as the great Instances of our Faithfulness to God herein) the Doctrines we should teach, the Tempers we should be of, and the Lives we should lead, who bear this Character.

- (a) 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20, 21. (b) Isa. liii. 5, 6.
(c) Rom. iv. 22, 23, 24. (d) 2 Cor. v. 21.

1. And first, as to the Doctrines we should preach. If our venerable Mother has *out-lived* her Authority among us; if a *very Humane* and polite Education has not lifted us up above her spiritual Simplicity; Let us collect our Doctrines from our own excellent Church; for she has collected them for us from the Word of Truth; not barely to *subscribe* them with Pen and Ink, but to subscribe our *Hearts* to them: She has collected the Heads of *sound Doctrine*, to be taught, both by our *Preaching* and *Living*, to our People.

2. And here not to go through her *Primitive* Liturgy (every Petition of which teaches as well as prays) Let us consider a few (as the Time permits) of her Articles and Homilies.

3. She lays the Foundation of all our Doctrines and Practice, in the Faith of a Trinity of Persons, in the one undivided Godhead: And this she proposes, not as a bare Speculative Truth, (as too many alas! receive it, who profess to believe the Trinity in Unity, but are *judged* without God in the World) but as the *Source* or *first Principle* of Life and Holiness in us; in *Us*, who by *Nature* are dead to God (in Consequence of his just Threat;) (a) and full of all Uncleanness. if then we mark the Doctrine of the Trinity *aright*, we preach what each Person is to us, even God the Father, *our* Father, who not only created us at first in his own Image, but when we had lost *this*, provided for a *New Creation*, by causing the whole destroy'd Nature, to be born

(a) Gen. ii. 17.

over again in his Son Jesus Christ; that every Individual of that Nature, might be capable of being *born again* by Faith, or created *anew* in Christ Jesus. This the Apostle means, where he says, (a) If any Man be in Christ, that is, if any Man be a true Christian, he is a new Creature, old Things are pass'd away, behold! all Things are become new. On Account of this double Creation, (the latter effected only in the true Believer) God hath a double Claim, if we are his Children, to our Hearts; yea, to all our Love and Obedience.

4. Again, if God the Son is preached aright, he is not represented as a Saviour at a Distance, much less one that is to save us from the Punishment of Sin only, that so we may *securely* live in it: but as a *present* Saviour, and as being therefore called *Jesus*, because he saves his People (Believers) from their Sins. He is preached as the *Promise of the Father*, through whom Satan is now bruised in the Believer; and in whom he now receives the *Atonement*, or Reconciliation rather; as the Word (b) καταλλαγή should be translated.

5. And the several Steps he took in reconciling us to God are preached (if preached aright) as having their *present* Effect upon us; viz. that he was conceived, born, lived, suffered, died, rose again, and ascended into Heaven; to the Intent, that He may be conceived (c) and formed in us: that we may be born again; (d) born of

(a) Cor. v. 17.

(b) Rom. v. 11.

(c) Gal. iv. 19.

(d) John iii. 3.

the *Spirit* as well as Water; (a) (for this latter, says our Church, is but the outward Sign: the *Inward spiritual Grace* that makes us *truly* Christians is a *Death unto Sin, and a new Birth unto Righteousness*.) (b) That having been baptized with *John's Baptism*, the Baptism of Repentance; (c) that is, a deep Self-knowledge, or *Spiritual* (d) Conviction of Sin; we may (*feeling* our Want of a Saviour) come to him to be restored, to be renewed; or baptized with the Holy Ghost and with Fire; with Grace and Love:—that we may live (as he did) a Self-denying Life, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt Affections:—that we may take up our Cross daily and follow him, till we are crucified with Him:—that we may die to Sin, and rise again with Him, to Newness of Life.—and that in Heart and Mind, we may thither ascend where he is, and with Him continually dwell.

6. Yet again; our Church directs us to describe the Holy Ghost, as the Lord and Giver of Life to a dead World—as sent by the Father and the Son; (e) receiving of *theirs*, and shewing it unto Men—as the Comforter (f) of the Poor in Spirit, the Mourners after God;—as the (g) Cleanser of our Hearts by his Inspiration—as in (h) all Things directing, ruling, (i) moving, filling them. Earnestly therefore are we to

(a) Gal. v.

(b) See Ch. Catechism.

(c) Matt. iii. 11.

(d) John xvi. 8, 9.

(e) See *Nicene Creed*. (f) Collect for Whit-Sunday.

(g) Collect at the Beginning of the Communion-Office.

(h) Collect for the 19th Sunday after Trinity. (i) Consecration Office.

withstand

withstand those, who speak as if there were no Holy Ghost; with whom the (a) *Inspiration of the blessed Spirit*; the (b) *Receiving the Holy Ghost*; (c) *the Feeling in ourselves the mighty Workings of the Spirit of Christ*; his dwelling in us, the Strengthening and Increasing daily more and more in the Holy Spirit, (which is every truly baptized Christian's Right (d) and Privilege) are denied, exploded, ridiculed! the last Efforts, *these* of that blaspheming Spirit spoken of by St. Peter! *Blasphemy* reserved for these Dregs of Time, wherein all manner of Sin and Iniquity (the *genuine* Fruits of that hellish Spirit) overflow our Land, as a Flood!

7. The Scriptures given by Inspiration of God, our Church wills us, in the next Place, to recommend to all; and to exhort them to a diligent Use thereof, as being able to make them wise unto Salvation: provided they be read or heard with the Spirit they were wrote, with Simplicity of Heart and deep Humility. “ And “ though the Knowledge of Scripture (says “ she) be great, large and high, yet the Door “ into them is very low; so that the high and “ arrogant Man cannot run in; but he must “ stoop low and humble himself that shall enter “ into it: and they only read them to profit, “ who are turned *into* them, who are most inspired with the Holy Ghost in reading them,

(a) 5th Sunday after *Easter*. (b) Ordination Office. (c) 17th Article. (d) Read the whole Office for Confirmation. Oh! that this Ordinance were administer'd *Parochially* every Year.

“ who

“ who in Heart and Life are altered and changed
 “ into that Thing which they read. (a)

8. From hence she willeth us to teach our People, their miserable and damnable State by Nature; to shew them their Fall in *Adam*, in whom all die; (in order to beget in them a Sense of the *Necessity* of their Resurrection to spiritual Life in *Jesus Christ*) — to shew them, that as his Offspring, they are conceived and born in Sin; that their inward Parts are very Wickedness; insomuch that, 'till they are born again, every Imagination of the Thoughts of their Hearts is *only* Evil continually (b) — to shew them, that this Original or *Birth-Sin* “ whereby they “ are very far gone from Original Righteousness, in every Man born into the World, deserves God's Wrath and Damnation:” (c) and all this to awaken them, to apprize them of their Danger, and point out to them their Want of a Saviour, that so they may come to Christ, as they are, *for that he receiveth Sinners*; and *whosoever* cometh to him *weary and heavy laden, he will in no wise cast out.* (d)

9. To take down yet more the Pride of vain Man, always ambitious to justify himself, she willeth us to shew farther; that Man cannot by Nature so much as think a good Thought — that if at any Time such an one comes into our Hearts, It is not of Nature, but of Grace — it is the drawing of the *Father* unto the Son, without which *no Man cometh unto him* (e): “ For that the Condition of Man since the Fall

(a) Read the 1st Homily. (b) Gen. vi. 5. 7.

(c) Article 9th. (d) John vi. 37. (e) John vi. 44.

“ of *Adam* is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural Strength or good Works, for Faith and Calling upon God: Wherefore we have no Power to do good Works, without the Grace of God by *Christ preventing* us that we may have a Good-will, and *Working with us*, when we have that Good-will.” (a)

10. We are more especially to labour under our great High-Priest, as to convince Men of *this Sin, the not believing in him*; (b) so to let them know, that nothing they do *can purchase* God's Favour, either in whole or in part. (c) “ For surely there can be no Work of any mortal Man (be he never so holy) that shall be coupled in Merits with *Christ's* most holy Act.” (d) To *justify* a Sinner; to new create him from a wicked Person to a righteous Man [that is, a Believer in *Christ*] is a greater Act than to make such a new Heaven and Earth, as is already made.” (e) If so; where is the Room for thy good Works, O vain Man! in the *Almighty* Affair of Justification? Learn then to look upon them in their proper Light; “ as the *Fruits* of that Faith, whereby God *has* justified thee; and that *as such only* are they acceptable to him; and that thou art justified, that is, *accounted Righteous before God only* for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus*

(a) Art. 10th. (b) John xvi. 8, 9. Rom. xi. 32.

(c) Rom. iii. 24. Tit. iii. 5.

(d) Homily Good-Friday.

(e) Homily for Rogation Week.

“ *Christ*

“ *Christ* by Faith, and not for thy own Works
“ and Deservings.” (a)

11. This Faith we are taught to describe, as
“ a sure Trust and Confidence in God’s merciful
“ Promises, to be saved from everlasting Dam-
“ nation by Christ.” Or, “ a sure Trust and
“ Confidence that our Sins *are* forgiven us, and
“ we reconciled to the Favour of God.” (b)

12. Now all Works whatsoever (seem they
never so specious outwardly, (c) be they never
so *naturally* good, or moral) “ All good Works
“ done before we have this Faith, before the
“ Inspiration of Christ’s Spirit, are not pleasing
“ to God (says our Church) neither do they make
“ Men meet, (O! Death-stroke to the Pride
“ of all human Merit!) “ to receive Grace:
“ Yea, rather for that they are not done as God
“ hath willed and commanded them to be done
“ (that is, in Faith and Love) we doubt not
“ but that they have the Nature of Sin.” (d)
And if any Man deny this, or “ if any Man
“ presume to say, that every Man shall be saved
“ by the Law or Sect which he professes, so that
“ he be diligent to frame his Life, according to
“ that Law and the Light of Nature, they
“ are (by All who regard the Judgment of our
Church,) “ to be held accursed: Seeing holy
“ Scripture doth set out unto us *only* the Name

(a) Art. 11th, and Homily on Justification.

(b) Homily on Salvation of Mankind.

(c) Sermon on good Works; and Homily on good
Works; and first of Fasting.

(d) Art. 13th.

C

“ of

“ of Jesus Christ, whereby Men must be
“ saved.” (a)

13. Those, doubtless, our Church here speaks of chiefly, (for what have we to do to judge those that are without?) Who living under the Mid-day Sun of the Gospel, shut their Eyes to it; and light up the glimmering Taper of their own Reason and natural Understanding to walk by. Now although this one Talent, which all Men have, but which most (with the unprofitable Servant) (b) abuse; may give some Check to the Torrent of *outward Sin*; although it may be of Use in civil Life, and keep us tolerably social, tolerably decent, till we shall accept of Revelation: Yet let all Men know it can do no more; nor did God design it *should*. 'Tis in Christ alone, that all Things are reconciled. In Him are all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge to restore all Things upon Earth, (c) fallen with fallen Man. 'Tis Christ who is now the Resurrection and the Life to the Soul of Man dead in Sin: (d) for verily *the Hour now is, when the Dead may hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear, that have Ears to hear, shall live.* (e) In a Word, nothing can restore God's *Microcosm* fallen to Ruin, but the great *Ἀντὶπῶς* Himself: Nothing can quicken, but he who is the Life of the World: Nothing can save but that Cross, on which the Saviour died: Nothing

(a) Art. 18th.

(b) Matt. xxv. 14.

(c) Rom viii. 22.

(d) Eph. ii. 1.

(e) John v. 25.

can redeem but that Gospel, which is *the Power of God to Salvation*.

14. From these few Doctrines of our own excellent Church, (for I have not Leisure to mention more) let us observe ; how faithful she is to her dear Bridegroom, her divine Head, her Almighty Lord ! How much she abominates that Spirit of Deism, that Spirit of Antichrist, which hath so prevailed for many Years, under the plausible Notion, *that Christianity is a reasonable Service* : Indeed it is so, *highly reasonable* but not according to the *natural* Reason of Man, (a) which (as a fallen Principle) is corrupt in its *best State* ; but of God, according to the Divine *λογος*, in whom are hid all the *Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*. How does she detest the Principles of those, who make the Gospel no more than a *Republication of the Law of Nature* ? Giving the Son of God the Honour of subscribing to their more admired *Plato and Aristotle* : Not knowing, that one great End of the Gospel, was, to humble this Pride of Man ; to pull down that rebellious Reason, which has started up to the Exclusion of Faith, daring to dispute whether God had said, *thou shalt not eat, for in the Day that thou eatest thou shalt surely die* : Not considering that for this Cause Christ emptied himself of his *real* Excellencies, that Man might be enabled to divest himself of his *imagined* ones ; his *boasted* Reason, his *fancied* Wisdom, his *darling* Self-righteousness : In a Word, not remembering, that in order to have Christ *ours*,

(a) 1 Cor. ii. 15.

we must deny ourselves: (a) the severest Act of which to the Pride of Man, is the casting-down Imaginations, (the destroying our Reasonings, λογισμῶς καθαιρουμένης, as the Original more strongly expresses it) and every high Thing that exalteth itself against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ. (b)

15. But indeed, my Brethren, these divine Doctrines cannot be rightly taught by us, unless there be divine Tempers within us: for out of the abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaketh. If the Minister have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come; If he himself has Redemption in the Blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of his own Sins, (c) he cannot forbear rejoicing in God his Saviour; he cannot forbear preaching to others Jesus Christ, and him crucified; or at least, the holy and just Law of God (d) in its spiritual Sense, in order to convince Men of their Want of Christ. But if he himself be asleep in Sin, or (like St. Paul in his unconverted State) alive without the Law: (e) If he be not so far awakned as to experience his want of Life, to hunger and thirst after the Righteousness of Christ; (f) if he feel not the working of the Spirit of Christ within him, he will be so far from mentioning what he has not at Heart; what he has not a particular Interest in himself; he will be so far from laying open the Treasures of the Gospel, the Mysteries of the

(a) Matt. xvi. 24.

(c) Col. i. 14.

(e) — 9.

(b) 2 Cor. x. 5.

(d) Rom. vii. 9, 11.

(f) Matt. v. 6.

inward Kingdom of Heaven, that he will rather ask (though a *Master* in *Israël*, though as *learned* as *Nicodemus*) How can these Things be?

16. I come therefore to consider as briefly as I can the Tempers we should be of, who are *Ministers of Christ*, and would be faithful *Stewards of the Mysteries of God*.

17. And what are these, my Brethren, but the same our Lord describes as necessary for every Christian (though more eminently for us) in the Beginning of his divine Sermon on the Mount? even Poverty of Spirit, or a *deep Knowledge* of ourselves; a *feeling* Sense of our Corruption and Misery, so long as we are alienated from the Life of God, so long as we have not *put on Christ*: An holy Mourning, an utter refusing to be comforted; while he is not in our Hearts—Meekness, Gentleness, not avenging ourselves, but giving Place unto Wrath, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us: A Hunger and Thirst after his Righteousness, a longing Desire after the full Renewal of our Souls, according to the Image of Him that created us, in Righteousness and true Holiness—Mercifulness or Love to all Mankind, even such a Love to every Soul of Man, that we feel ourselves ready to lay down our Life for his Sake—Purity of Heart, or that perfect Love of God that casteth out all other Love, all inordinate Self-Love, all Love of the World, all unholy Love of any Creature, even such a Love of the one God as *purgeth* the Heart from all its Idols, *cleanseth us from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit*, and *purifies us even as he is pure*.

pure. (a) It remains only for him who is thus conformed to the Likeness of his Lord to be a Peace-maker; zealous of good Works; doing good unto all Men: And to rejoice and be exceeding glad, while he is persecuted for Righteousness Sake; while the World, all those who are unrighteous, that is, Unbelievers, do (because he is not of the World) revile him, and say all Manner of Evil against him *falsely* for the Son of Man's Sake.

18. But whether we be going among Men *thro' Honour or Dishonour; thro' evil Report or good Report.* "Nothing is so highly honourable in itself (says a Christian Writer) as to bear a Part in the Priesthood of Christ, and to be employ'd in the Work of the Ministry. But then it should be well considered, that this is only honourable in the same Sense, as it may be said, that nothing is more honourable than to suffer as a Martyr. It is an Honour that is as different from all worldly Figure and Distinction, as the Glory of Christ upon the Cross is different from the Triumphs of an earthly Prince. When therefore we think of the Honour and Dignity of the Pastoral Function, we should be careful to remember, that it is only the Honour of dying a Martyr; the Honour of humbling, abasing and sacrificing ourselves *with Christ*; and continuing the Exercise of his suffering Priesthood, for the Salvation of the World.*

(a) : John 33.

* See Mr. Law's serious Answer to Dr. Trapp, a Book that deserves the deepest Consideration, and sincerest Thanks of every Clergyman.

19. And

19. And hence it evidently follows, that an utter Renunciation of all *worldly* Tempers, an Abhorrence of the *very Air* of Grandeur and Figure in the World, and a constant Spirit of *universal* Self-denial, are more *indispensably* necessary for *us*, in order to the successful Discharge of our Office, than to other Christians. *We* especially need the *deepest* Humility, and the most *thorough* Self-abasement, that we may bring every Thought into Captivity to the Obedience of Christ: That being *empty'd* of ourselves, we may continually look unto Him, in whom all Fullness dwells, as our Wisdom and Strength; (for who is sufficient for these Things!) and may rejoice, that we are ever dependent on him, without whom we *especially* can do nothing. And he is the greatest among the Ministers of Christ (whether Bishop or Priest) who is most conformed to his Lord, by an humble Love; by an unwearied Care of his Sheep; and by stooping to the meanest Offices to serve them. *Ye know*, says our Lord, *that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise Dominion over them, and they that are great exercise Authority upon them: But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your Minister, [Διακονος] and whosoever will be Chief among you let him be your Servant: even as the Son of Man came not to be minister'd unto, but to minister [διακονειν] and to give his Life a Ransom for many.*

20. Yet once more: It is more especially needful for *us*, to be patient and long-suffering: For if we preach the Cross, *indeed*, my Brethren, we shall carry it: This being a Doctrine, which
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the World never yet *could* bear, and though called Christian, never will, till it is Christian indeed. If we preach Christ crucified, or Grace here and Glory hereafter, thro' his Blood *alone*, the Offence of the Cross will attend us *still*: and we shall fare as St. Paul did, when he determin'd to know nothing else: We shall be among our People in *Weakness and Fear, and much trembling*: Though at the same Time (such a Paradox is the Christian Spirit) *We shall be in nothing terrify'd by our Adversaries*: But having such Hope (even that Hope that maketh not ashamed) *we shall use great plainness of Speech*: Not fearing the Faces of Men, *we shall declare unto them the whole Counsel of God*; and shall accordingly take them to record, both now and in the great Day, *that we are pure from the Blood of all Men*.

21. If these Tempers, my Brethren, be in us, and abound, they will influence our Lives, and cause us to adorn the Gospel of God our Saviour in all Things: And so indeed it behoveth us to do; being *holy in all Manner of Conversation*; blameless, vigilant, sober, of good Behaviour, apt to teach, not given to Wine, no Strikers, not given to filthy Lucre; not covetous, but *holding the Mystery of Faith, (even Christ in us the Hope of Glory) in a pure Conscience*. It behoveth us above all, to *confess Christ before Men*: For every Minister of Christ is, by Profession, not only a Believer, but a Confessor also. He is called (with his Master) to witness a good Confession both before Herod and Pontius Pilate; before our modern Jews and Gentiles: And that with a
holy

holy boldness whether *they will hear, or whether they will forbear*. For the World (which has not even yet received the Spirit of Truth) *will threaten, and straitly command us, not to teach in this Name*; (a) that is not to preach, Salvation in it *alone*, (b) without our Works, as *Conditions*: Without our own Righteousness, or Merit in Part; which *single Thought* overturns the Design of the *whole Gospel of Christ*. But let us, my Brethren, if we are call'd to this Gospel, preach It in *Truth*: Let us publish and offer the *free Gift* to all Men, the Gift by Grace which is by *one Man Jesus Christ*. (c) And indeed if we know, that we ourselves are *justify'd freely*, (d) we shall rejoice, and cry out with the Prophet, *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price*. (e) Yea, having tasted *ourselves* that the Lord is gracious, and (what is still a farther Incitement) *being put in trust with the Gospel*; we shall (without being moved either by the Smiles or Threats of an Unbelieving World) preach the *glad Tydings*; "*Peace upon Earth, Good-Will towards Men*"; that the Son of Man hath "*still Power upon Earth* to forgive Sins: Nay, that the Gospel is the KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION BY THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS." This we shall be *instant* in; in Season and out of Season: And that more especially because we see with our Eyes, *the Time is come when Men can-*

(a) Acts iv. 17, 18.

(b) — 12.

(c) Rom. v. 15.

(d) — iii. 24.

(e) Isa. lv. 1.

not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lusts turn away their Ears from the Truth unto Fables: Even Fables of Satan's devising, that other Gospel, which the Apostle complains of; (a) viz. Salvation by the Law of Works; or Justification by a natural, a barely moral, or human Righteousness, instead of the compleat, the All-sufficient Righteousness of God (b), (c) imputed to the Believer: (d) and a formal, loveless, outward Religion, instead of the new Nature; the Known Known; (e) the Faith that worketh by Love, (f) the Restauration of the Soul in the Image of God. (g)

22. In a Word, my Brethren, let us always look to Him that appointed us, and hear his weighty Words still sounding in our Ears, 'As my Father hath sent me so send I you.' Let us consider what we are appointed to, no common Stewardship indeed: Let us always so act and speak, as Workers together with the great high Priest of our Profession: And then we shall give no Offence in any Thing, that the Ministry be not blamed, but shall in all Things approve ourselves as the Ministers of God; in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses; yea, it may be in Stripes, in Imprisonments, in Tumults, in Labours: For we know not how soon they, who dare to preach the Gospel of Christ *apud eos*, in Purity (without any human Mixtures, that is, Corruptions) may be call'd to this. Let

(a) Gal. i. 6, 7, 8, 9. (b) Rom. iii. 21, 22.

(c) Rom. x. 3, 4. (d) Rom. iv. 22, 23, 24.

(e) 2 Cor. ii. 17. (f) Gal. v. vi. 6, 15.

(g) Gal. iv. 19. Eph. iii. 17.

us always remember the near Relation to Himself wherewith our Lord honours us, even that of being his κληρος, his own Lot;—that we are not only with other Christians, call'd to be Saints; but ἀφαιρισμένοι *separated from the World*, to the Gospel of God. So shall we make it our *one Business*, to have our Conversation as it becometh that Gospel; to adorn it by *Pureness*, by *Knowledge*, by *Love unfeigned*, by the *Word of Truth*, by the *Power of God* accompanying our Ministry; by the *Armour of Righteousness* on the right Hand and on the left; by *Honour and Dishonour*; by *evil Report and good Report*; as *Deceivers* (in the Esteem of the World) (a) and yet true; as *unknown*, and yet *well known*; as *dying*, and behold we *live*; as *chastened* and not *kill'd*; as *sorrowful*, yet *always rejoicing*; as *poor*, yet *making many rich*; as *having nothing*, and yet *possessing all Things*.

I come now to the last Thing proposed in this Discourse, which was to enquire, whether we do preach these Doctrines, and have such Tempers, and lead such Lives as become the high Character we bear, *Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God*. *

1. And here, my Brethren, my Want of personal Acquaintance with you, obliges me to appeal to your Hearts, whether each of you have, from the Time that the Holy Ghost made you an *Overseer* of the Flock of Christ, not incident-

(a) Cor. ii. 14.

* It was just here that the right worshipful the Ordinary, together with the Clergy, rose up and left me to finish my Discourse to the Laity.

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tally mentioned those great Truths prescribed us by our Church; but made them the *constant* Subject of *all* your Discourses; and inculcated them from your *Hearts*? You gave your Assent and Consent to them. Have you preach'd them accordingly? If not, enquire into the Motive and Spring of such your Assent and Consent. Have you (to be more particular) preached God the Father, as the Father of *every Believer*, shedding his Love abroad in his Heart? Have you preached God the Son, as a *present Saviour*, as that Jesus (a) that saves his People *from* their Sins *now*; in order to save them from the Consequence, from the Wages of Sin hereafter? Have you preach'd Him as the Mediator, whose Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension are to have their *present* Effects on Believers? Have you set Him forth as the Image of God to be form'd in their Hearts by Faith; as their Saviour, *ὡς το πωρωτης* to the uttermost, or *into* that which is *all perfect*? Have you preach'd the Holy Ghost as the Lord and Giver of Life; as giving Life to the *Dead in Trespasses and Sins*; and sanctifying them Body, Soul, and Spirit? Have you labour'd more abundantly *under Him* to reprove your Flock of Unbelief and Sin; (b) to convince them of their miserable and damnable State by Nature; of that Original or Birth Sin, whereby they are *altogether* corrupt and abominable, full of Pride, of a rebellious Self-will, and all Uncleaness; and *all this*, (in love to their dying Souls) to apprize them of their *utter* Want of a Saviour? Have you *so* recommended the Scriptures, as being *only* possible to

(a) Matt. i. 21.

(b) John xvi. 8, 9.

be understood by the *Inspiration* of the Holy Ghost? Have you instantly told your People: that *they cannot turn or prepare themselves for that Faith*, whereby alone they must be saved; but that as it is God's Gift *alone* (a), (b) It must be diligently sought by Prayer? (c) Have you told them that *all Works* done before they have *this Faith*, *all their natural, or barely moral Works* without Faith, Grace, and the Love of God, have in them the Nature of Sin? (d) Have you been continually shewing them, that we are justify'd, that is, forgiven, and *accounted Righteous* before God, by Faith *alone*; and that the only Works pleasing to God, and necessary, as its Fruits are, the *grateful, loving Labours, or hearty, sincere* Actions of our Nature *so justify'd*. To say no more; have you told them, that the true Faith is a *sure Trust and Confidence in God*, that by the *Merits of Christ* our Sins are forgiven, and we *reconcil'd to the Favour of God*. (e)

2. That these *fundamental Doctrines* of the Reformation are not *generally* preach'd among us, is *too* notoriously true to be denied: * And hence arises, without question, the low Esteem that our

(a) Eph. ii. 8. (b) Phil. i. 29.

(c) Matt. vii. 7, 11.

(d) Article 13th.

(e) Read 1st. Part of Homily of good Works, annexed to Faith.

(f) See the 3d Part of Homily of Salvation by Faith.

* This may be proved beyond Dispute from Numbers of the most celebrated Sermons within this last Century.

Articles and Homilies are in at this Day: Although 'tis sure, they are as necessary to be read and expounded *now*, as when they were first set forth: The *latter* in particular, which are enjoin'd to be not only subscribed to, but preach'd, under the 35th Article. And this I mention not so much to guard us *now* against the *lesser Errors* of Popery, as against the *greatest* of them All—that which carries in its Forehead the *Mark of Antichrist*, the Mark of the Beast; I mean that *other Gospel*, Justification by *human* or *moral* Righteousness: For this is that *damning Unbelief*—This is *THE SIN* against the Gospel of Christ: For indeed if Righteousness come by the Law, then is Christ dead in vain: Then is all our Preaching vain: Then is our Faith vain; then are both we and our People yet in our Sins.

3. But to return: Have we such Tempers as become the Ministers of Christ, and *faithful* Stewards of the Mysteries of God? Are we Poor in Spirit? Have we a deep *feeling* Sense of our *Spiritual* Death, our *inward* Corruption? Are we mourning after God? Do our own Hearts *so* shew us the Unbelief and Wickedness of the Ungodly, (a) as to cause us to *beseech* our People to pray instantly for Faith, and to be cleansed *from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit*? Are we gentle to all Men, quiet, patient, meek, long-suffering? Are we athirst for God? Do we hunger and long after his Salvation? Are we full of Bowels of Mercies? loving to another, yea all Mankind, as Christ loved us? Are we pure in Heart, not loving the World, neither the Things of the World, neither its Honours, nor Riches, nor

(a) Psal. xxxvi. 1.

Vanities: But loving the Lord our God with all our Hearts, being always happy in Him, rejoicing in Him evermore, praying to Him without ceasing; and in every Thing giving Thanks, more especially in being persecuted for his Name's Sake?

4. Is this Spirit our Spirit? or is that Mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus? (a) Are we *dead* (the proper Effect of Baptism) (b) and is our *Life hid with Christ in God*? (c) Are we *crucified unto the World, and the World crucified unto us*? And in a Word, are our Lives answerable to these Tempers? If so; whence this Ambition? This courting the World? This labouring after Honours and Preferments? Whence this hungering and thirsting after rich Livings, after Lordship and Title and Dominion? Do we heap Living upon Living in Proof of our being *crucify'd to the World*? Do we take *this State* upon ourselves in Obedience to that Command of Him, whom we call our Master, "IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG 'You,' but *whosoever will be Chief among you, let him be your Minister, whosoever will be great among you let him be your Servant*?"

5. Indeed, my Brethren, howsoever many may have thought that the Gospel must *submit* to Times and Seasons, and be *accommodated* to the Modes and Fashions of the Ages it passes thro': From the Beginning it was not so: No, nor ever shall be. The Gospel, like its divine Au-

(a) Phil. ii. 5.
Col. ii. 12.

(b) Read the 6th to Rom. and
(c) Col. iii. 3.

thor, is the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever; the *everlasting* Gospel, (a) one unchangeable Truth. So that if it was *once* necessary to lose our Life in order to save It: If Mortification and Self-abasement, or Self-denial were *ever* necessary to the Death of Nature, in Order to its Resurrection with Christ, they are necessary *still*: If once it was necessary for those who desired to sit on his right Hand and on his left in his Kingdom, to drink of the Cup, which He drank of; it is necessary *still* in one Degree or other. This is *still* a faithful Saying (which St. Paul once spake to a Dignitary in the Church) *If we be dead with him, we shall also live with Him, if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: But if we deny Him, he will also deny us* (b). Nay, our Lord himself puts it in stronger Words, *Whosoever will deny me before Men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* (c)

6. But some Men will say "At this Rate "how shall we support the *Dignity* and *Credit* "of the Gospel?" *Non tali auxilio.* Let us but preach the Word; and God will look to the Event. Is this the Power that supported the Gospel, when it *flourished most*, under *all* the Discountenance of the World? But what do you mean by these Words? What do you understand by the *Credit* of the Gospel? A great Living? or two or three? or Honour, and Title, and Equipage? Why, has the Author of the Gospel taught you to support these? Or the Gospel by these? Did he not say, IT SHALL

(a) Rev. xiv. 6.

(b) 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

(c) Mat. x. 33.

NOT BE SO? Did not the Chief of his Apostles utterly renounce *all* these, detest and abhor them; and cry out, *God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ?*

7. O My Brethren, let us know that *these* Things cannot be in the Heart, where Jesus Christ is *form'd* (a) (b). Let us know that these worldly Maxims are deadly Poison to the Religion of Christ; that as the Life of Christ is *peculiarly* our Pattern, so never can we support the Dignity of our Characters, but by an *utter* Renunciation of the World; all its Wisdom, Tempers, Pleasures, and Honours; and by denying ourselves, and taking up our Cross daily, and following Him. As it is both our Duty and Interest constantly to watch over our own Hearts, so let us be *continually* jealous of them, (for they are deceitful above all Things) lest we be beguiled thereby: And let us be jealous also of the World, knowing that its *Prince*, (c) and its *Great Ones*, are combined to make us *unfaithful* to our Lord: That he bribes us with the Smiles of the Rich and Great (*generally speaking*) only to *countenance* their Infidelity and ungodly Practices, to decoy us into *servile Compliances*, unbecoming the *Ambassadors* of Christ; (d) and into a base betraying the Interests of our Master. O! Let us beg of God to give us so firm a Dependence on Him, that these Worldly Dependencies insnare us not into *Unfaithfulness* of any Kind—Such a Measure of *filial* Fear in our Hearts, that we may never fear the Faces of Men—And such

(a) Gal. iv. 19.

(b) Eph. iii. 17.

(c) John xiv.

(d) 2 Cor. v. 20.

spiritual Wisdom and Understanding, that our Eye may pierce thro' *all* the Devices of the Enemy.

8. To conclude, what have we to do, but without any Regard to our pleasing or displeasing Men (tho' indeed if we yet please Men we are not Servants of Christ) (a) simply to deliver this Message, "*He pardoneth and absolveth, or forgiveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel?*" And thus while we have a single Eye to the Discharge of our Duty; the Dignity of our Office will be abundantly secured. Men will esteem us very highly in love for our *Work's Sake*. They will bless God for us, as having been the happy Instruments in his Hands of turning them from *Darkness to Light*, and from the *Power of Satan unto God*, that they together with us might receive the *Forgiveness of their Sins*, and an *Inheritance among them that are sanctify'd by Faith which is in Christ*. To Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit be ascribed all *Honour and Glory, Power and Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion*, both now and for evermore, *Amen*.

(a) Gal. i. 10.

F I N I S.

